

FHAB Holiday Assessment Program

HABs = harmful algal blooms

Background

- The summer months are when HABs are most prevalent and holiday weekends are when Californians get out and recreate at waterways
- Holiday assessment sampling helps inform the public which waterways are safe from HABs
- Partnering in this effort means you help keep Californians and their pets safe while in and around the water



Why monitor for HABs?

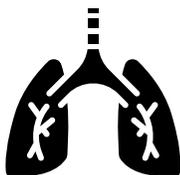
HABs are easy to come in contact with and cause illness in people and animals every year



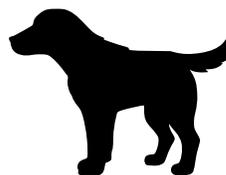
Children are particularly susceptible because they are likely to come into contact with the water or algal mats



Toxins can cause symptoms like abdominal pain, diarrhea, and vomiting, and may need medical treatment



You can be exposed through inhalation, and the toxins can cause respiratory illness



Dogs are attracted to the musty smell of some algal mats, and there are reports of dogs harmed by HABs every year

How to Participate

No prior sampling experience required!

Training and technical assistance are available

Email the Water Board Freshwater and Estuarine Harmful Algal Bloom (FHAB) team at cianoHAB.reports@waterboards.ca.gov if interested and the team will follow up to:

- Provide sampling and data submission instructions
- Indicate whether supplies, shipping, or lab analysis can be supported

Assessment Timelines

Holiday Program	Collect Samples	Submit Data
Memorial Day	5/3-5/13	5/21/2026
Independence Day	6/10-6/25	7/2/2026
Labor Day	8/13-8/27	9/3/2026

Common misconceptions about HABs



Misconception

Fact



The water doesn't look dirty, so there isn't a HAB



Different types of HABs vary in appearance - sometimes the water can be clear but still have toxins or growth on the bottom



I live in a place without HABs, so it's not important that I monitor



HABs are prevalent throughout the entire state of California



HABs only occur in lakes and reservoirs



HABs can be also found in streams and rivers

Did you know?

Harmful algae can grow at the top of the water (planktonic) or at the bottom (benthic)



Planktonic harmful algal bloom



Benthic harmful algal bloom

How do we use this information?

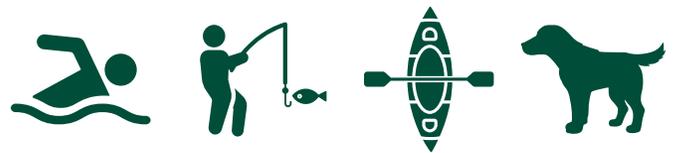
Sample results populate the CA [HAB Reports Map](#) before major holiday weekends and are shared through the [California Cyanobacterial Harmful Algal Bloom Network](#) email list

The data informs whether advisories are recommended and supports placement of physical advisory signage at popular access points

Your data helps keep the public informed!

How can you use this information?

This information can help you make decisions about how to best protect you and your family's health



The CA HAB Reports Map can inform whether it is safe to swim, fish, or recreate in and around the water

Additional information



[HAB FAQs](#)



[Web Map](#)



[Advisory FAQs](#)



[Trigger Levels for Advisories](#)



[Satellite Imagery Web Tool](#)